

## NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF COORG

BY

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In the following notes, I have tried to make as complete a list as possible of the birds of one district of Coorg. Its comprehensiveness is limited however, by the fact that it is entirely the result of personal observation over a very limited area in the short period of a year and a half. Very few birds have been shot and handled and in consequence it has been impossible in many cases to identify the subspecies with any certainty. Besides some families, notably the warblers and babblers, are, by reason of their skulking habits and sober colouring, very hard to observe and identify and the list of these is almost certainly incomplete.

The Province of Coorg includes country varying tremendously in elevation and climate. On the West it runs down to the Malabar coastal plain, from whose dense, humid forests only two or three hundred feet above sea-level, tower up the Western Ghats rising to grassy summits nearly 6,000 feet in height. These hills and their western slopes experience a huge rainfall. To the east there is a well-wooded, undulating plateau of average elevation about 3,000 feet, with a fair rainfall and permanent streams, which is almost entirely under cultivation, chiefly paddy, coffee and oranges. Further east still is a range of low hills, rising to 4,000 feet covered in dense bamboo jungle. Beyond these lies the dry, hot Mysore plateau and the jungle is low thorny scrub.

The notes refer chiefly to the central plateau of the province and especially to the country round Pollibetta and Sidapur lying on the southern bank of the River Cauvery.

As regards migrants, there are two categories. There appear to be no summer migrants of any description. The true winter migrants, birds breeding in the far North, seem to arrive first in Mysore and do not usually spread westwards into Coorg for a fortnight or so. Besides these, there appears to be a considerable amount of local migration, east and west, a number of species occurring here during the cold weather but departing before the breeding season whilst they may be seen in Mysore at all seasons of the year. Notable examples are the Common King Crow and the Common Bee Eater.

1. *Corvus coronoides*. The Jungle Crow.

Common everywhere around human habitations, occurring also in the jungle though in smaller numbers.

2. *Corvus splendens splendens*. The Common Indian House Crow.

Uncommon. Only a few odd pairs may occasionally be seen in villages apparently living quite in harmony with the Jungle Crow.

3. *Dendrocitta rufa*. The Indian Tree Pie.

Fairly common. It is often to be seen in pairs or small parties in the tops of tall trees. It appears to be exclusively arboreal and is rather shy. It is a noisy bird, most of its calls being harsh but it has a flute-like note very similar to the cry of the Indian Oriole.

4. *Parus major maharratarum*. The Southern Grey Tit.

Fairly common, one or two may often be seen in the mixed blocks of small birds, Minivets, White-eyes, Pied Shrikes and Nuthatches that roam through the tree tops. A breeding resident.

5. *Machlolophus xanthogenys*. The Southern Yellow-cheeked Tit.

Commoner than the last species. It usually goes about in small parties often in company with other small insectivorous birds. It appears to use old Coppersmith's nest holes high up in dead trees for nesting purposes. A quiet bird for a tit, having a low, jarring note.

**6. *Sitta frontalis*.** The Velvet-fronted Blue Nuthatch.

A common resident. A typical nuthatch running the tree trunks and branches like a mouse. It is exceedingly active and keeps up a continual cheeping call, usually occurs in small flocks or pairs.

**7. *Turdoides terricolor*.** The Southern Jungle Babbler.

Fairly common. A skulking, noisy bird, always going about in flocks of six or seven birds, keeping very much to thick undergrowth and jungle and very loath to fly far. It is far more often heard than seen.

**8. *Argya caudata*.** The Common Babbler.

Uncommon, though probably less than it appears, as it is a great skulker and does not come near gardens and cultivation, preferring the thick jungle undergrowth.

**9. *Pomatorhinus horsfieldi travancoriensis*.** The Southern Indian Scimitar Babbler.

Fairly common. It goes about in small flocks and has a loud hooping call and is exceedingly noisy when disturbed or frightened. It appears to be more arboreal than most Babblers and may often be seen high up in the trees.

**10. *Pellorneum ruficeps*.** The Spotted Babbler.

An extremely shy little bird haunting thick undergrowth and hardly ever seen. A nest I found, however, on April 15, 1928, containing two hard set eggs, was quite in the open in a heap of dead leaves at the foot of an anthill and was a deep little cup, made of dry leaves and domed with the same and lined with a few black rootlets.

**11. *Rhopocichla atriceps*.** The Black-headed Babbler.

Very common in all dense marshy jungles, and thickets near streams, in reed beds and bamboo jungle. A shy bird but noisy, continually uttering its whirring alarm note. The nests may be found in large numbers in such jungles at any time of the year, mere rough balls of bamboo leaves and reeds about nine inches in diameter, so loosely put together that they fall to pieces at a touch. They are stuck in any bush or patch of grass three or four feet from the ground. Only a very few of these nests ever contain eggs and one may often find a number of half built or incomplete nests within a few yards of each other, suggesting that these birds build spare nests for roosting like wrens.

**12. *Ægithina tiphia*.** The Common Iora.

A common resident, usually seen in pairs or small family parties. It has a great variety of notes including a very tit-like alarm cry. It is entirely arboreal and haunts open jungle and gardens. A nest was found with newly-hatched young in a coffee bush at the end of August.

**13. *Chloropsis aurifrons davidsoni*.** The Malabar Chloropsis.

A very common resident. It is a sweet songster and a great mimic. It usually goes about in small flocks in the tree tops. It is very fond of any honey-bearing flowering trees, especially *Erythrinas*, searching the blossoms either for the honey or the insects attracted.

**14. *Microscelis psaroides ganeesa*.** The Southern Indian Black Bulbul.

An occasional wanderer into the district but decidedly uncommon. It is a bird of higher elevations and doubtless is common on the higher peaks of the Ghats. A restless, strong-flying bird haunting high trees in small flocks. It is extremely noisy and has a very harsh voice.

**15. *Molpastes hæmorrhous hæmorrhous*.** The Ceylon Red-vented Bulbul.  
Not very common though a widely distributed breeding resident.**16. *Otocompsa emeria fuscicaudata*.** The Southern Red-whiskered Bulbul.

One of the commonest and most conspicuous birds of the district, abounding everywhere except in dense jungle. May be found breeding at almost any time of the year, making its nest in any low bush, often quite in the open with very little concealment.

17. *Iole icterica*. The Yellow-browed Bulbul.

Common but not conspicuous. It shuns the haunts of man and inhabits the edges of thick jungle. It is usually seen in pairs and has a low, sweet whistle uttered on the wing but is otherwise very silent.

18. *Pycnonotus gularis*. The Ruby-throated Bulbul.

A rather scarce resident; living in dense jungle and very shy. It has a very pretty tinkling call of half a dozen notes, really a song and far superior to the efforts of the common bulbuls.

19. *Microtarsus poliocephalus*. The Grey-headed Bulbul.

Common in heavily-wooded swampy jungles. It keeps to the trees and is shy and hard to observe. It has one continually uttered wheezy call note.

20. *Larvirora brunnea*. The Indian Blue Chat.

A rare winter migrant. Once seen on November 22, 1927.

21. *Saxicola caprata atrata*. The Southern Stone Chat.

Not very common but sometimes to be seen in pairs in open cultivated fields and dry paddy land.

22. *Saxicoloides fulcata fulcata*. The Black-backed Indian Robin.

Very rare here. Only one doubtful record.

23. *Copsychs saularis saularis*. The Indian Magpie Robin.

A very common breeding resident and one of the best songsters.

24. *Kittacincla Macroura indica*. The Indian Shama.

Not uncommon but local. It is a much shyer bird than the Dayal and keeps to the jungle. It is a beautiful songster and is decidedly crepuscular, being most active at dusk and singing when almost every other bird has gone to roost. It feeds much on the ground and in low bushes.

25. *Turdus merula simillinus* (?) The Nilgiri Blackbird.

A blackbird of some subspecies is a scarce resident, extremely shy and never leaving dense cover. Its head is noticeably darker than the body which agrees with '*simillimus*' but its habits are very different from the blackbird which occurs on the Nilgiris, where it is tame and fearless, inhabiting quite open country.

26. *Geocichla citrina cyanotis*. The White-throated Ground Thrush.

A fairly common resident in shady, well-wooded parts. It appears to spend a lot of its time in the trees though finding much of its food by scratching among the leaves on the ground. It has a very pretty, though not very powerful song, reminiscent of the Song Thrush, during the hot weather and usually sings from a perch well up in a tree.

27. *Oreocincla dauma nilgiriensis*. The Nilgiri Thrush.

Rare. An extremely shy bird keeping to jungle with dense undergrowth.

28. *Monticola cinclorhyncha*. The Blue-headed Rock Thrush.

A common winter migrant. The males seem greatly to outnumber the females. It is a solitary bird, haunting wooded country and keeping to the trees. Earliest date of arrival October 27.

29. *Monticola solitaria pandoo*. The Indian Blue Rock Thrush.

An occasional winter visitor. One bird lived for the whole of 1927-28 cold weather on or about a large store shed, spending most of its time on the ledges under the eaves and never going far away from it.

30. *Siphia parva parva*. The European Red-breasted Flycatcher.

A fairly common winter migrant, haunting open shady woods. It is shy and has one continually uttered little grating call note. The birds seem to be all females or immature specimens. I have never noted a fully developed male. A young one I shot was just growing red on the throat.

31. *Cyornis tickellia tickellia*. Tickell's Blue Flycatcher.

A fairly common little bird inhabiting shady woods, orchards, etc. It is quite tame and has a pretty little song somewhat reminiscent of a hedge sparrow. A pair had a nest with young in June 1928 in an old barbet hole in a broken off branch of a big tree some 35 feet up.

**32. *Cyornis pallipes pallipes*.** The White-bellied Blue Flycatcher.

Fairly common in the same sort of localities as Tickell's Flycatcher. Very similar in habits.

**33. *Alseonax latirostris poonensis*.** The Indian Brown Flycatcher.

Fairly common and resident. A very quiet and unobtrusive little woodland bird.

**34. *Terpsiphone paradisi paradisi*.** The Indian Paradise Flycatcher.

Resident but not common. A shy and quiet bird inhabiting shady woodland country.

**35. *Hypothymis azurea sykesii*.** The Madras Black-naped Flycatcher.

Very scarce. Only twice seen.

**36. *Lanius schach caniceps*.** The Southern Rufous-backed Shrike.

Uncommon. Occasionally seen in the drier parts of the country in open parkland or at the edges of dried paddy fields.

**37. *Lanius cristatus cristatus*.** The Brown Shrike.

An exceedingly common winter migrant from September to the end of March, occurring almost everywhere even in forest. It is an active, noisy bird with a singularly harsh voice. It is a typical shrike in its habits, hunting from some outstanding perch on a fence or tree whence it flies out and catches its insect prey, either on the ground or in the air. Earliest date seen September 11.

**38. *Hemipus picatus picatus*.** The Black-backed Pied Shrike.

A common resident. These birds are very like Flycatchers in their habits and usually go about in pairs or small flocks, often in company with minivets. They nest about April, building high up in dead or leafless trees. The nests are minute cups glued on top of a branch and are almost impossible to detect from the ground and usually quite inaccessible if seen.

**39. *Tephrodornis pondiceriana pondiceriana*.** The Common Indian Wood Shrike.

Not common. May be seen occasionally in small flocks hunting through the trees.

**40. *Pericrocotus speciosus flammeus*.** The Orange Minivet.

A common resident and one of our most striking birds, the scarlet males contrasting vividly with the bright yellow females. Usually seen in flocks of both sexes though fully plumaged males are in the minority. It appears to breed very late in the season, the winter flocks not breaking up till May or June and I found a nest in the Nilgiris in September.

**41. *Pericrocotus erythropygius*.** The White-bellied Minivet.

Common though not so numerous as the last species, which it much resembles in habits.

**42. *Lalage sykesii*.** The Black-headed Cuckoo Shrike.

Common in the winter months in well-wooded cultivated land but it disappears about the end of March probably retiring to the jungle to breed. A silent bird.

**43. *Graucalus macei macei*.** The Large Indian Cuckoo Shrike.

A common resident. In the off season it forms small flocks, keeping to high trees in the open. It has a very harsh, ill-tempered call rather like some of the harsher notes of the Oriole.

**44. *Artamus fuscus*.** The Ashy Swallow Shrike.

Locally common. In the evenings they collect in large flocks on tall trees and thence sail forth to catch flies with constant harsh, chattering cries. They are especially active after showers when a flight of termites occurs. I have seen them chase and mob a Shahin Falcon.

**45. *Dicrurus macrocercus*.** The Black Drongo.

Exceedingly common in the cold weather but they disappear almost entirely in the hot weather and do not become numerous again until September. It seems doubtful if they breed in the district.

46. *Dicrurus leucophaeus* subsp. The Grey Drongo.

This bird of which I have been so far unable to shoot a specimen, is moderately common here. It appears to be almost as dark as the Black Drongo but is considerably smaller and has a comparatively much shorter tail which is only slightly forked. It is exactly similar to the Black Drongo in habits and like that bird disappears almost entirely in the breeding season.

47. *Chibia hottentotta hottentotta*. The Indian Hair-crested Drongo.

Rare. I have only seen this species on two or three occasions, always in pairs. Its distinctive marks are its large size and its almost square tail with up-turned outer feathers.

48. *Dissemurus paradiseus malabaricus*. The Malabar Large Racket-tailed Drongo.

A common resident in the wooded parts of the district. They appear to pair for life and keep together throughout the year. Each pair owns a considerable territory and allows no trespassers of their own species on their domain. In spite of their size and pugnacity, however, I have seen one attacked and fleeing from a common Black Drongo. They do not seem to wander much and remain in their breeding haunts all the year round. They are very late in going to bed and may be seen hawking insects from some high dead tree until well after sunset when all the other diurnal birds have gone to roost. Their prolonged tail feathers make a characteristic humming noise in flight which can be heard at a considerable distance.

49. *Orthotomus sutorius sutorius*. The Indian Tailor Bird.

An extremely common resident though far from noticeable, except in the breeding season when their loud calls resound everywhere. They are late breeders, not nesting in any numbers till well after the monsoon has broken in July.

50. *Cisticola juncidis cursitans*. The Streaked Fantail Warbler.

Very common in all paddy fields and long grass bordering on them.

51. *Prinia socialis*. The Ashy Wren Warbler.

Scarce.

52. *Phylloscopus* sp. The Willow Warbler.

Some form of Willow Warbler, which I have been unable to identify, is a common winter migrant.

53. *Irena puella*. The Fairy Blue Bird.

Fairly common in the cold weather. Earliest date noted November 26. It haunts woodlands and gardens keeping to tall trees and has a very pretty bubbling whistle. It is entirely arboreal and is apparently mainly frugivorous being fond of various kinds of wild figs.

54. *Oriolus indicus*. The Black-naped Oriole.

One bird, a very brightly coloured female, seen on February 7, 1929.

55. *Oriolus oriolus*. The Indian Oriole.

Very common in the cold weather from about the end of October but they all depart about the end of March. Earliest record October 23.

56. *Eulabes religiosa*. The Southern Grackle.

Common in all wooded parts of the district. They are very noisy birds making the most extraordinary wheezes and chuckles interspersed with loud whistles of a remarkably human 'timbre'. They breed in colonies in natural hollows or old woodpecker holes in high trees.

57. *Acridotheres tristis*. The Common Mynah.

One of our commonest birds, swarming wherever there is cultivation but shunning the jungle. In the cold weather they gather in vast flocks to roost in reed beds. It is a most interesting sight to see them leaving these communal roosting places in the early morning. The various flocks burst out with a rush of wings, one by one in most orderly manner and after a few preliminary circles set off straight as a die for their various feeding grounds, each flock keeping together and taking a separate direction. It is a very prolific bird.

I found one nest with six eggs in March which were hatched and reared successfully and the bird laid four more eggs in the same nest in May.

**58. *Sturnia malabarica blythii*.** Blyth's Mynah.

A very common resident though not so common as the last bird. It breeds in barbet holes in high trees and often seems to evict the rightful owner. In the cold weather it roosts in large numbers in reed beds in company with the common Mynahs.

**59. *Uroloncha striata striata*.** White-backed Munia.

A common resident, usually occurring in considerable flocks and picking up much of its food which consists of grain and seeds on the ground. It breeds chiefly in July after the rains break and nearly always makes its nest in small trees standing by themselves right out in the open. It frequently breeds in gardens and is very tame. Both birds of a pair usually roost in the nest both before it is completed and while the eggs are being incubated.

**60. *Gymnoris xanthacollis xanthacollis*.** The Yellow-throated Sparrow.

A common resident breeding in old barbet holes in high trees. It keeps away from human habitations being decidedly shy. It has a loud chirrup very like that of the House Sparrow.

**61. *Passer domesticus indicus*.** The House Sparrow.

Ubiquitous in all towns and villages but never seen far away from them.

**62. *Corpodacus* sp.** The Rose Finch.

A somewhat uncommon winter migrant occurring in large flocks. First seen December 22, 1928.

**63. *Hirundo rustica gutturalis*.** The Eastern Swallow.

A common winter visitor. A very large number of these migrants are young birds lacking the prolonged outer tail feathers. Earliest date for Coorg, September 28, but in Mysore I saw them in large numbers on September 16. Nearly all our winter migrants arrive in Mysore at least a week before they penetrate into Coorg although it is on the same latitude.

**64. *Hirundo daurica*.** The Striated Swallow.

A fairly common resident in the dryer parts of the district. It is fearless of man but is especially prevalent round tanks in the jungle. It often nests under bridges and culverts.

**65. *Motacilla alba maderaspatensis*.** The Large Pied Wagtail.

Occurs though not in large numbers along the banks of rivers and big tanks. It is apparently resident.

**66. *Motacilla cinerea*.** The Grey Wagtail.

Our commonest winter migrant. Dates of arrival, August 28, 1927 (Nilgiris), August 31, 1928 (Coorg).

**67. *Dendronanthus indicus*.** The Forest Wagtail.

A well distributed winter migrant, but never very numerous. It keeps to shady woodlands clear of undergrowth and may be seen picking up insects under the trees though it is much more arboreal than other Wagtails. Its tail is comparatively short and is wagged from side to side not up and down. It is usually solitary or in pairs and has a 'chink, chink' call very like a Chaffinch. Earliest record October 16.

**68. *Anthus richardi rufulus*.** The Indian Pipit.

A common resident breeding in all parts wherever there is any open grass land.

**69. *Zosterops palpebrosa*.** The Indian White-eye.

A common resident.

**70. *Leptocoma asiaticus*.** The Purple Sunbird.

Common everywhere. The winter moult only seems to affect some birds, as one sees males in breeding plumage at all seasons of the year.

**71. *Leptocoma zeylanicus*.** The Purple-rumped Sunbird.

Even commoner than the Purple Sunbird. There appears to be a great increase in numbers of this species in the breeding season at the end of the hot weather, though whether this is actually the case I do not know. It might be due to be males putting on an 'eclipse' plumage for a few months after the autumn moult and not moulting into breeding plumage till late.

**72. *Dicaeum erythrorhynchus*.** Tickell's Flowerpecker.

A very common resident breeding about April, when they can often be seen collecting down from the seed heads of various weeds. The nest is somewhat like a small edition of a Sunbird's but is more globular and lacks the tail of rubbish hanging below.

**73. *Pitta brachyura*.** The Indian Pitta.

A fairly common winter migrant. It is a solitary bird haunting dense thickets and thick shady forest where it hops about on the ground coming out in the open occasionally in the evening. It has a loud shrill call which is heard much more often than the bird is seen.

**74. *Picus chlorolophus chlorogaster*.** The Southern Yellow-naped Woodpecker.

Widely spread but nowhere numerous. It chiefly haunts damp swampy forest land. It has a harsh screaming cry but not nearly so loud as the Golden-backed Woodpecker. It is an early breeder. I saw one evict a Green Barbet and take possession of its nest-hole early in January and found a nest with three newly-hatched young at the end of February. This nest was in a stump not five feet from the ground, unusually low for a Woodpecker.

**75. *Iyngipicus gymnophthalmus*.** The Pigmy Woodpecker.

Fairly common. An active little bird resembling a nuthatch in its habits, and often going about with the mixed flocks of Tits, Nuthatches and other small birds which are commonly seen in the cold weather. It keeps exclusively to the tops of tall trees.

**76. *Micropternus brachyurus*.** The Rufous Woodpecker.

Fairly common. It is a great drummer and usually betrays its presence in this way, but is otherwise very silent.

**77. *Brachypternus aurantius puncticollis*.** The Southern Golden-backed Woodpecker.

Much the commonest woodpecker in these parts. It is a very noisy bird with its harsh scream and an energetic drummer. It is an early breeder usually hatching out its young in the first week of March.

**78. *Thereiceryx zeylanicus*.** The Green Barbet.

One of the very commonest birds here, its loud monotonous call dominating every other bird note except the Coppersmith, and resounding all day the whole year round. Every dead soft-wooded tree is riddled with its neat round nest-holes. It is a very early breeder starting in December. They literally swarm on certain species of wild fig when the latter are in fruit. They seem to be almost entirely frugivorous but I have seen one catch and devour a small lizard.

**79. *Xantholæma hæmacephala indica*.** The Indian Crimson-breasted Barbet.

As common as its larger relative and very similar in habits. They breed either in dead trees or dead branches of living trees usually high up. They will desert a hole at once even if a straw is pushed in to feel, before the eggs are laid. They apparently never breed twice in the same hole.

**80. *Coracias benghalensis indica*.** The South Indian Roller.

An occasional visitor in the dry season never staying long. To be seen on isolated trees in open fields or on telegraph wires.

**81. *Merops orientalis orientalis*.** The Common Bee-eater.

An exceedingly common species in the cold weather arriving in October and leaving at the beginning of March. It is common at all times of the year in the dry Mysore plateau 20 miles to the East and apparently breeds there. Arrived October 10, 1928. Last seen March 7, 1929.

**82. *Melittophagus erythrocephalus*.** The Chesnut-headed Bee-eater.

This species appears to be a passage migrant in this part of the world. It was extremely common in large flocks during June 1928 but disappeared entirely at the end of the month. A flock was seen on September 24, 1928, but since then none. They always kept very closely together and ten or twelve might be seen huddled on one branch flying out at intervals to catch an insect.

- 83. *Ceryle rudis leucomelanura*.** The Indian Pied Kingfisher.  
Common on the Cauvery and other big streams but not on small brooks or tanks much surrounded with trees. It never fishes from a perch but flies over the water and hovers like a Kestral and then plunges headlong, often from a very considerable height.
- 84. *Alcedo atthis taprobana*.** The Ceylon Kingfisher.  
Common. Most small ponds have a pair which are resident there throughout the year.
- 85. *Halcyon smyrnensis*.** The White-breasted Kingfisher.  
Common. It is a solitary bird and much less of a fish eater than most species. It is often seen well away from any water, though it is very fond of wet paddy fields. Its call is a loud, harsh scream usually uttered in flight.
- 86. *Upupa epops ceylonensis*.** The Hoopoe.  
Uncommon. May occasionally be seen in the cold weather in dry open 'maidans' picking up insects, usually solitary, but sometimes in pairs.
- 87. *Micropus affinis affinis*.** The Common Indian House Swift.  
Fairly common but its numbers vary greatly. One day it may be seen in large flocks and then disappear for several weeks. I do not think it breeds in the district, though I have found a breeding colony under a bridge in Mysore territory some ten miles over the border.
- 88. *Hirundinapus gigantea indica*.** The Brown-necked Spinetail.  
Not very common. May be seen in small parties wheeling high in the air at tremendous speed. They are magnificent fliers and few birds can be faster.
- 89. *Collocalia unicolor unicolor*.** The Indian Edible Swiftlet.  
The commonest swift here. It is always present in large numbers and probably breeds in caves in the higher hills.
- 90. *Caprimulgus asiaticus*.** The Common Indian Nightjar.  
Common wherever there are patches of open land with jungle near at hand. They have a great partiality for squatting on roads through the jungle after dark; driving a car at night one flushes them in dozens. Their eyes show up when reflected in the headlights, as ruby specks, at a tremendous distance, up to quite two hundred yards.
- 91. *Hierococcyx varius*.** The Common Hawk Cuckoo.  
Uncommon. I have never heard it calling. Usually to be seen slipping furtively about in low trees in orchards and the edges of the jungle. I saw an immature cuckoo, which I believe was of this species being fed by a pair of Magpie Robins in June.
- 92. *Eudynamis scolopaceus scolopaceus*.** The Indian Koel.  
Only a casual visitor to the district though very common down in the Mysore plains.
- 93. *Centropus sinensis parroti*.** The Southern Crow Pheasant.  
Very common everywhere though most usually to be seen on the borders of swamps and thickets of lantana and brushwood.
- 94. *Psittacula cyanocephala cyanocephala*.** The Western Blossom-headed Paroquet.  
Extremely common and very tame. They do an enormous amount of damage in orchards and paddy fields, eating the fruit and grain. They are very early nesters, starting at the beginning of January, enlarging a natural hole in a dead tree or an old Woodpecker's hole. Their nests may always be identified by looking at the chips underneath the tree. In the case of the Paroquet they are almost cubic chunks evidently bitten off, whilst woodpeckers and barbets make long thin slivers, using their beaks chisel fashion.
- 95. *Psittacula columboides*.** The Blue-winged Paroquet.  
Common though not so numerous as the last species. Its cry is rather harsher than that of the Blossom-headed Paroquet but its habits are quite similar and it breeds about the same time.

**96. *Coryllis indicus*.** The Ceylon Loriquet.

Very common, though a quiet little bird keeping to the tree-tops and hence inconspicuous. Its call is a weak little scream. It is very tame especially when any garden fruit is ripe, robbing the trees with the utmost boldness. It is very fond of loquats.

**97. *Huhua nipalensis*.** The Forest Eagle-Owl.

Widely distributed though nowhere numerous. It spends the day in thick evergreen trees and is much mobbed by Drongos and Minivets if discovered. At night it may often be disturbed from stumps or rocks on road sides and is very fearless, flying only a few yards and settling again. Its cry is a deep, low moan.

**98. *Pseudogyps bengalensis*.** The White-backed Vulture.

The only common vulture here. A few birds may usually be seen soaring at an immense altitude, whilst if anything has died in the vicinity scores of them congregate in a very short time.

**99. *Neophron percnopterus ginginianus*.** The Smaller White Scavenger Vulture.

I saw one of these birds on February 26, 1929 circling round a slaughter-house in company with White-backed Vultures. This is the only time I have seen one in Coorg though they are common enough in Mysore.

**100. *Ictinaetus malayensis perniger*.** The Indian Black Eagle.

One of these birds visited the estate on which I live for about a week in November 1928. It was very shy and wary and spent most of its time sailing low over jungle and swamps quartering the country rather like a Harrier. It was noticeably long winged. This is the only occasion on which I have seen it.

**101. *Spilornis cheela*.** The Serpent Eagle.

Common, though not very numerous, each pair having a wide territory of their own. It is rather sluggish spending most of its time perched on dead trees by ponds and swamps. It apparently feeds largely on frogs. I have several times seen it settled on the ground in paddy fields, probably frog hunting, though I have never found any signs of anything on putting it up. I once saw one eating offal from a bullock which had just been slaughtered. At times it soars high in the air, often two or three together, uttering its distinctive loud, whistling cry.

**102. *Pollioaetus ichtyaetus*.** The Large Grey-headed Fishing Eagle.

The only pair I have seen haunt a small tank in the jungle on the Coorg-Mysore frontier. They have their eyrie, a huge mass of sticks, in the fork of a big jungle tree some forty feet from the ground.

**103. *Haliastur indus indus*.** The Brahminy Kite.

Stray birds are occasionally seen, but it is far from common.

**104. *Milvus migrans govinda*.** The Common Pariah Kite.

Occurs in the neighbourhood of most villages, but not in any great numbers. It does not appear to breed in the district, disappearing at the end of the hot weather.

**105. *Astur badius*.** The Shikra.

Widely spread but not common.

**106. *Buteo* sp.** The Buzzard.

A buzzard of some species is a fairly common resident in the district. It is usually to be seen in pairs, soaring high in the air, uttering a mewing whistle very like the cry of the European Buzzard. In the breeding season they go through curious aerial evolutions rather like the tumbling of a raven. The bird swoops downwards and then turning sharply flaps vertically upwards for a few feet, then rolls over and swoops headlong with closed wings for several yards, flattens out and repeats the performance, all the while uttering a sharp, short 'kit, kit, kit.' They are light coloured birds and have a peculiar crest of a few black feathers sticking vertically up from the back of the head. I saw a pair feeding a full grown young one with lizards on July 24, 1928.

**107. *Falco peregrinus peregrinator*.** The Shahn Falcon.  
An occasional wanderer into the district.

**108. *Dendrophasa pompadora pompadora*.** The Pompadour Green Pigeon.  
Large flocks of these birds come into the coffee estates from September to Christmas to feed on the fruit of various fig trees which are grown as shade. They spend the rest of the year in the jungle.

**109. *Chalcophaps indica*.** The Bronze-winged Dove.  
A forest bird but occasionally seen in well-wooded coffee estates. Usually encountered flying low and very fast through the woods or picking up grain round cart stands on jungle roads. It is nearly always solitary.

**110. *Streptopelia chinensis*.** The Spotted Dove.  
Swarms everywhere. One of our commonest birds. It is very tame and confiding. It feeds mainly on the ground on grain and various wild seeds. One which I examined, had its crop stuffed with the seeds of the Sensitive Plant (*Mimosa*).

**111. *Pavo cristatus*.** The Common Peafowl.  
Common in the scrub jungle on the Mysore frontier.

**112. *Gallus sonnerati*.** The Grey Jungle Fowl.  
Common everywhere even in cultivated land wherever there is sufficient cover in the form of lantana scrub. They may always be seen in large numbers soon after dawn on any road through the jungle.

**113. *Galloperdix spadicea*.** The Red Spur Fowl.  
Common in the same sort of country as the Jungle fowl. It can be heard very much more frequently than it can be seen as it is very shy and seldom leaves cover.

**114. *Microperdix erythrorhyncha*.** The Painted Bush Quail.  
Somewhat scarce, though one comes across a bevy of them now and then dusting in the road.

**115. *Lobivanelus indicus indicus*.** The Indian Red-wattled Lapwing.  
Common around tanks and on maidans in the drier parts of the jungle, also along the banks of the Cauvery where it is open.

**116. *Tringa ochropus*.** The Green Sandpiper.  
These birds may be seen in the cold weather singly or in pairs in almost every patch of marsh, in stream beds or round tanks. They never seem to go far from water and move about very little.

Each pair have their favourite spot where they may be found at any time and they seem to return to it year after year. They are early arrivals and leave very late, often lingering on into May. First seen September 30, 1928.

**117. *Gallinago stenura*.** The Pintail Snipe.  
Abundant in the cold weather in suitable swamps and abandoned paddy fields. They are usually in large wisps at the beginning of the season but split up into pairs before leaving. They are peculiar birds and may throng one field one year whilst another apparently just as suitable will not hold one. The next year the positions may be reversed. Date first seen October 10, 1928. This is very late and birds were seen in Mysore three weeks earlier whilst one hears of stray individuals in August. Most have left by the end of March though a few pricked birds, which are not strong enough to migrate, linger on.

**118. *Amaurornis phœnicura phœnicura*.** The White-breasted Water-Hen.  
A shy and solitary bird which may occasionally be flushed out of reed beds near ponds and along the banks of streams.

**119. *Ardeola grayii*.** The Indian Pond Heron.  
Widely distributed wherever there are paddy fields, ponds or swamps.